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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

*Memorandum*



THE SITUATION IN VIETNAM

Information as of 0600  
7 March 1965

PREPARED FOR THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

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84

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Office of Current Intelligence  
7 March 1965

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Vietnam as of 0600 EST

Communist Political Developments

1. The Chinese Communists have followed up their initial propaganda attacks concerning alleged Russian police brutality in putting down the most recent student demonstration against the US Embassy in Moscow with a formal protest to the Soviet government. The Chinese note, delivered to Foreign Minister Gromyko on 6 March, implies that the USSR approves and is supporting "imperialist aggression" in Vietnam.

2. After charging that the students were subjected to "ruthless suppression" by Soviet police and soldiers, the Chinese declared sarcastically that they "cannot understand" why the Soviet government is so fearful of offending the US or how a "socialist country" could use troops against students who were engaged in an anti-American demonstration. The note demanded that the Soviet government apologize to the students and asked "severe punishment" for "those who committed the violence" against them.

3. When he delivered the note, the Chinese ambassador registered an additional complaint concerning inadequate medical treatment provided for the students who had been injured in the riot. He charged that the Russians, out of "ulterior political motives," had evicted serious cases from a Moscow hospital.

4. Peiping radio has been describing the injuries sustained by these students in considerable detail and has also complained of the lack

of hospital care provided by the Soviet Union. Peiping charged that seven injured Chinese students were "ruthlessly evicted" from a hospital. One of the released students was allegedly so ill that he had to be returned immediately to a hospital for treatment.

5. Several hundred Chinese and foreign students demonstrated in front of the Soviet Embassy in Peiping yesterday, protesting the actions of the Soviet police in Moscow. No serious incidents were reported and the participants apparently were content with shouting slogans.

#### Communist Military Developments

6. No significant Chinese Communist, North Vietnamese or Soviet military deployments have been detected in the past 24 hours which could be directly related to the Vietnamese situation.

7. The DRV ambassador in Moscow claimed on 6 March that many Russians had offered their services as volunteers to fight in Vietnam. A TASS broadcast reporting the ambassador's remarks gave no other details.

#### Internal Developments in South Vietnam

8. Rumors of a coup attempt involving the return of General Khiem were sparked yesterday in Saigon as a result of unusual military movements, including buzzing of the capital by two Vietnamese air force planes. The coup rumors had no known foundation, and the military movements were possibly connected in part with local operations. However, Air Force commander General Ky has been strengthening his own command post against any renewed coup threat, thereby adding to the uneasiness in Saigon.

9. The CIA Station in Saigon has no indication that a coup is imminent or in final planning stages, but notes that an attempt can never be fully discounted, particularly while Colonel Pham Ngoc Thao is on the loose and in contact with younger field-grade officers.

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11. Buddhist leaders are reported to have presented Premier Quat a list of five "requests," including release of their followers still detained for earlier anti-government activity, reopening of pro-Buddhist newspapers, and reinstatement of a monk who had been ousted as deputy director of the chaplain corps. This may be the opening of a campaign to test the Quat government.

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12. Premier Quat, during a courtesy call yesterday by Embassy and visiting Defense Department officials, suggested that consideration be given to a joint US/South Vietnamese military command. He said he had not yet discussed this with his own generals; he may consider the proposal one means of curbing their political activities. Quat gave other indications that he hopes to bring the military under greater control. He told his guests that he would like to return some responsibilities now exercised by field commands to the defense ministry, and to make fuller use of inactive generals.

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Viet Cong Military Activity

14. Viet Cong terrorist and military activity continues rather intense. A provincial capital, in northern Quang Tri Province, came under mortar fire early on 6 March and, in a counter effort, the defending regimental commander was killed and his deputy captured. In Kien Hoa Province in the delta south of Saigon, a district town came under mortar fire and five nearby paramilitary posts and a watchtower were simultaneously fired on.

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16. Two battalions of US Marines are scheduled to land at Da Nang on 8 March to strengthen the general security of the Da Nang air base complex.

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